AND THERE CAME A DAY, A DAY UNLIKE ANY OTHER, WHEN EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES FOUND THEMSELVES UNITED AGAINST A COMMON THREAT! AND ON THAT DAY, THE AVENGERS WERE BORN, TO FIGHT THE FOES NO SINGLE SUPER HERO COULD WITHSTAND!

THE NEW AVENGERS

PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS

THE SHAPE-SHIFTING ALIEN RACE KNOWN AS THE SKRULLS HAS FAILED AT THEIR ATTEMPTED INVASION OF EARTH. BUT THE DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE.

TONY STARK TOOK THE BLAME FOR THE INVASION AND HAS BEEN STRIPPED OF HIS ROLES AS BOTH LEADER OF THE AVENGERS AND DIRECTOR OF A NOW DEFUNCT S.H.I.E.L.D., WHILE THUNDERBOLTS LEADER AND ONE-TIME SUPER-VILLAIN GREEN GOBLIN NORMAN OSBORN HAS RISEN TO POWER AND BEEN APPOINTED TO REPLACE STARK.

STILL NONE OF THEM, NOT EVEN THE AVENGERS, CAN EVEN KNOW THE FULL EXTENT OF THE INVASION OR WHICH OF THEM WAS -- OR COULD STILL BE -- A SKRULL AGENT.

DURING THE INVASION, THE GROWING PARANOIA CREATES A RIFT IN THE MARRIAGE OF AVENGER LUKE CAGE AND JESSICA JONES. WORRIED FOR THE SAFETY OF THEIR CHILD, JESSICA SEEKS SHELTER AT AVENGERS TOWER, UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF STARK'S BUTLER, JARVIS, TO WAIT OUT THE WORST OF IT.

BUT WHEN THE INVASION'S FINAL BATTLE HIT ITS ZENITH, JESSICA JONES MADE THE SELFLESS DECISION TO LEAVE HER CHILD WITH JARVIS AND FIGHT ALONGSIDE HER HUSBAND. LITTLE DID SHE KNOW, JARVIS WAS ONE OF THE SKRULL AGENTS EMBEDDED WITHIN THE AVENGERS.

BY THE TIME JESSICA FIGURED IT OUT, JARVIS, AND THE BABY, WERE GONE.

BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS
WRITER

BILLY TAN
PENCILS

MATT BANNING
INKS

JUSTIN PONSOR
COLORIST

RS & COMICRAFT'S
ALBERT DESCHESNE
LETTERER

TAN, BANNING AND
JASON KEITH
COVER ART

RANDALL MILLER
& ANTHONDY DIAL
PRODUCTION

JEANINE SCHAEFER
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

TOM BREVOORT
EDITOR

JOE QUESADA
EDITOR IN CHIEF

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

NEW AVENGERS (ISSN #1931-8995) **No. 48, February, 2009**. Published Monthly by MARVEL PUBLISHING, INC., a subsidiary of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT, INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 417 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10016. **PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.**

© 2008 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental.

$2.99 per copy in the U.S. (GST #R127032852) in the direct market and $3.99 per copy in the U.S. and $3.99 in Canada (GST #R127032852) through the newsstand. Canadian Agreement #40668537. **Printed in the USA.** Subscription rate (U.S. dollars) for 12 issues: U.S. $27.00, Canada $37.00, Foreign $39.00. **POSTMASTER: SEND ALL ADDRESS CHANGES TO NEW AVENGERS, C/O MARVEL SUBSCRIPTION DEPT. P.O. BOX 110 NEWBURGH, NY 12550. TELEPHONE # (800) 217-9158. FAX # (845) 457-5029. subscriptions@marvelsubs.com.** ALAN FINE, CEO Marvel Toys & Publishing Divisions and Chief Marvel Characters, Inc.; JIM SOKOLOWSKI, Chief Operating Officer; DAWN GABRIEL, SVP of Publishing Sales & Circulation; DAVID BOGART, SVP of Business Affairs & Talent Management; MICHAEL PASCIULLO, VP Merchandising & Communications; JIM O'KEITH, VP of Operations & Logistics; DAN CARR, Executive Director of Publishing Technology; JUSTIN F. GABRIEL, Director of Publishing & Editorial Operations; SUSAN CRESPI, Editorial Operations Manager; ALEX MORALES, Publishing Operations Manager; STAN LEE, Chairman Emeritus. For information regarding advertising in Marvel Comics or on Marvel.com, please contact Mitch Dane, Advertising Director, at mdane@marvel.com. For Marvel subscription inquiries, please call 800-217-9158.

CENTRAL PARK, SKRULL BATTLEFIELD
BARTON, LISTEN, WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS...
...
YEAH, OKAY.... WE CAN DO THAT.
GOOD.
YEAH?
YEAH?
WHAT?

THE BRONX, THE NEXT DAY.
SPIDER-MAN
HMMM?
WOLVERINE
OKAY, THEN... THERE IS NO SPOON.
THERE IS NO SPOON. THERE IS NO SPOON. THERE IS NO SPOON. THERE IS NO AAAGGHH!

I AM BEYOND TIRED.
TRY A BEER, BARTON.
MY BODY'S A TEMPLE.
PUT BEER IN YOUR TEMPLE.
RONIN
OKAY, THAT IS SO WEIRD.
AND COOL.
MOCKINGBIRD
S'UP, WEBS.
THIS— THIS IS CAPTAIN AMERICA'S HOUSE?
YUP.
AND THAT GUY, AT THE FIGHT. HE'S THE NEW CAPTAIN AMERICA?
YUP.
DO WE KNOW WHO HE IS?
BUCKY.
WHAT'S HIS ADULT NAME?
BUCKY. CAP'S OLD PARTNER. HE'S CAP NOW. THIS IS CAP'S PLACE.
SAID HE'LL BE OUT IN A MINUTE.
WHERE IS HE?
AND WE THINK HE'S NOT A SKRULL BECAUSE?
BECAUSE WE'RE DONE WITH THEM.
WE HOPE.
WE DO.
AND WHY ARE WE HERE?
WE SHOULD WAIT FOR EVERYONE BEFORE WE GET INTO IT.
HEY, SPIDEY...
THIS IS MY WIFE, MOCKINGBIRD.
OH, YEAH, WE HAD A COUPLE OF TEAM-UPS BACK IN THE DAY.
SO, UH, HOW'S NOT BEING DEAD?
YEP.
PRETTY GOOD.
"YEAH?" HE ASKED AWKWARDLY.
I'M SORRY, NO... YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS...?

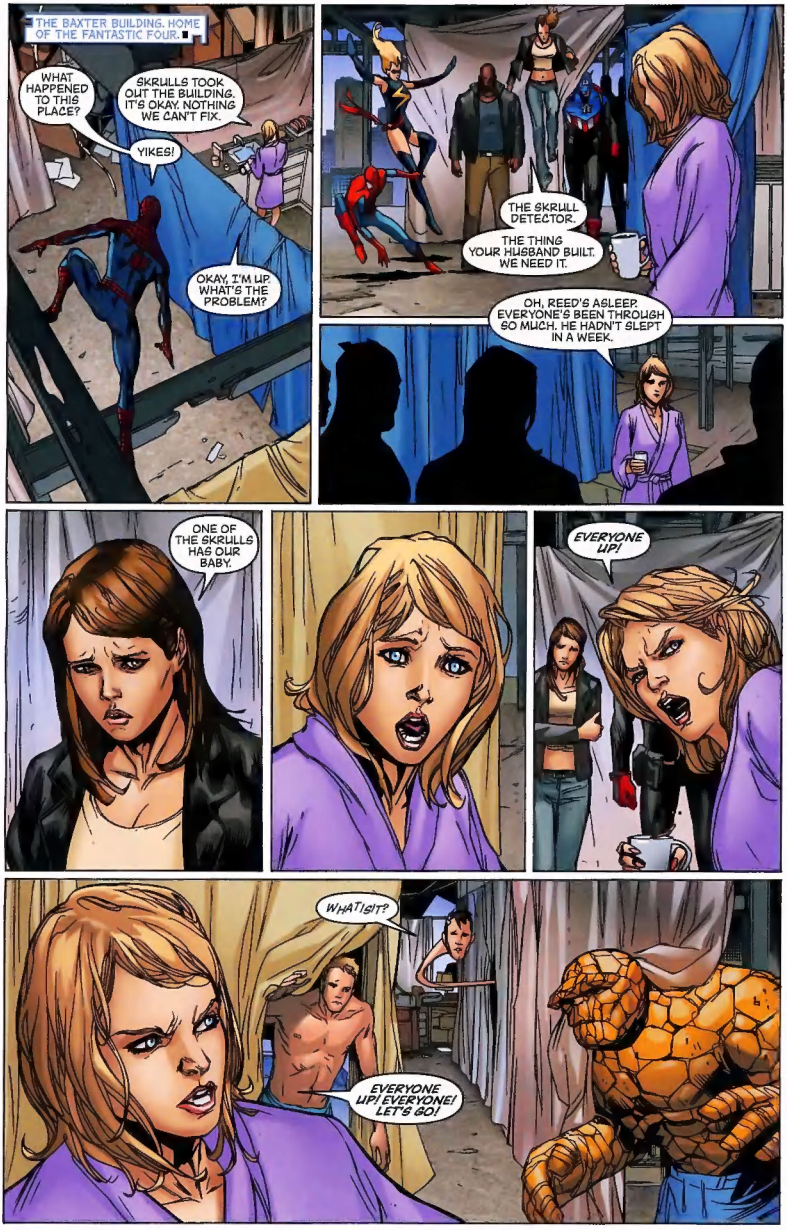
I CAN'T BE CUTE ABOUT IT.
I'VE LOST YEARS OF MY LIFE. YEARS!
THE ENTIRE WORLD HAS CHANGED.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO BE DOING NOW. I DON'T KNOW WHAT--WHERE-- I DON'T KNOW WHERE I BELONG NOW!
WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT.
HOW?
WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU CAN BE SO ZEN ABOUT--
HEY, BE MAD. I HEAR YOU.
BUT TODAY I'M JUST GOING TO ENJOY THAT YOU'RE BACK.
OKAY?
OKAY.
OKAY.
BUT I'M ALSO GOING TO SIT HERE AND STEAM THAT WE LOST JANET.
OKAY, BUT WHILE WE'RE WAITING FOR WHOEVER...
CAN WE TAKE A MOMENT AND JUST FREAK OUT ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO US?
WE ALMOST LOST THE PLANET EARTH! WE ALMOST COMPLETELY LOST IT.
BUT WE DIDN'T.
BUT NOT FOR NOTHING. THE BIG BATTLE. NICK FURY? THOR? OSBORN?
NORMAN OSBORN AND VENOM! THOR!
THIS IS WAY PAST MY FREAK-OUT THRESHOLD. THAT WAS CRAZY.
YOU SEEN THE NEWS SINCE?
NO. I'VE BEEN ASLEEP FOR TWENTY HOURS.
WHAT'S ON THE NEWS?
IRON FIST
HEY, YOU GUYS HEARD FROM LUKE AND JESSICA?
HEY, DANNY. NO.
NO.
DAMN IT.
YOU GUYS SAW JESSICA JONES FREAKED OUT AND TOOK OFF AFTER THE BIG BATTLE.
AND THEN LUKE AND CAROL FOLLOWED HER.
NO, DIDN'T SEE THEM.
NO.
I DIDN'T SEE EITHER. IT WAS CROWDED.
THIS-- THIS IS BAD.
I SAW THEM.
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?

SPIDER-WOMAN
WHO INVITED YOU?
I DID.
WHY?
SHE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.
UH... HEY, JESSICA.
WASN'T HER.
SKRULLS TOOK HER OUT. TOOK HER PLACE. JUST LIKE THEY DID TO YOUR WIFE, ONLY WORSE.
SHE GOT IT THE WORST OF ALL OF US.
I'LL GO.
NO. DON'T.
I ONLY CAME BECAUSE I THOUGHT--
BECAUSE--
I DON'T KNOW WHERE ELSE TO GO.
HI. I'M BOBBI MORSE. AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D. WE MET A BILLION YEARS AGO.
AND I THINK WE WERE BOTH ON THAT SHIP.
I THINK. RIGHT?
S.H.I.E.L.D.'S FOLDED.
SERIOUSLY?
WHY DO YOU THINK WE'RE NOT ALL BEING INTERROGATED TILL WE PASS OUT? THERE'S NO ONE TO INTERROGATE US.
TOLD YOU, TURN ON THE TV.
IF S.H.I.E.L.D IS GONE, WHO'S TAPPING OUR PHONES? IS FURY BACK IN CHARGE?
DON'T THINK SO. THAT I WOULD HAVE HEARD ABOUT.
IS THIS EVERYBODY THEN?
NO. LUKE CAGE AND I'M BETTIN' CAROL DANVERS ARE GOING TO NEED TO BE HERE TOO.
SHE'S WITH TONY STARK.
NOT SO MUCH.
SERIOUSLY? IS THERE A TV IN HERE? INTERWEBS?
WELL, WE CAN WAIT FOR EVERYONE ELSE, BUT LISTEN...

THE WORLD NEEDS THE AVENGERS. NOW, MAYBE, MORE THAN EVER.
I KNOW CAP PUT THIS TEAM TOGETHER.
HE WOULD HAVE BEEN OVER THE MOON PROUD OF WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY.
YOU WON A WAR.
YOU WON.
YOU'RE CAPTAIN AMERICA'S AVENGERS.
SO THIS IS YOUR HOME AS MUCH AS IT IS MINE.
THIS IS AVENGERS HEADQUARTERS.
THERE'RE PLENTY OF ROOMS, THERE'S A GYM...
YOU CAN ALL LIVE HERE, OR COME AND GO.
BUT THIS IS YOUR HOME NOW...
IF YOU WANT IT.
DO YOU HAVE A TV?
LISTEN, I THOUGHT THAT THIS IS WHAT THIS WAS, SO I CAME HERE TO TELL YOU GUYS IN PERSON....
I JUST CAN'T DO THIS RIGHT NOW. MY COMPANY, MY LIFE. EVERYTHING IS FALLING APART.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THIS SKRULL @#$% HAS DONE TO THE MARKET.
I NEED TO GO DEAL WITH THAT. BUT YOU GUYS NEED ME, YOU CALL.
THAT GOES WITHOUT SAYING.
YOU GOT NOTHIN' TO APOLOGIZE FOR.
LISTEN, IF LUKE OR JESSICA COME HERE, YOU TELL THEM TO CALL. I'M REALLY--
UH, GUYS...?

LUKE CAGE
THEY GOT THE BABY!
JESSICA JONES
THEY GOT DANIELLE!
MS. MARVEL
WHO?
THEM! THEM THEM! THE SKRULLS.
JARVIS WAS ONE OF THEM.
NO!
IT'S TRUE.
JARVIS?!
I LEFT THE BABY WITH HIM TO JOIN THE FIGHT.
I DIDN'T KNOW-- I DIDN'T--
THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD HAVE.
SHE'S REALLY BEATING HERSELF UP OVER THIS.
OF COURSE I AM, CAROL.
BUT SHE'S RIGHT, THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD HAVE KNOWN.
WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THE ENTIRE TOWER.
WE'VE BEEN THROUGH ALL OF THIS JARVIS' STUFF.
THERE'S NOTHING. NO CLUE TO WHERE HE WENT OR WHY.
WE CHECKED EVERYTHING, EVERYWHERE WE COULD THINK OF.
HE COULD BE ANY SHAPE OR SIZE. HE COULD BE ANYONE.
OUR BABY COULD BE DEAD, ALIVE. WE DON'T KNOW.
WHY WOULD IT TAKE YOUR BABY?
HOSTAGE.
SOMETHING TO BARTER WITH SO IT CAN GET THE HELL OFF THIS PLANET IN ONE PIECE.
BABY'S ALIVE, YA HEAR ME?
IF JARVIS KILLS YOUR KID, HE KNOWS WE'LL KILL HIM. IT'S ONLY GOOD TO HIM ALIVE.
WILL YOU HELP US?!
YOU HAVE TO HELP US!

THE AVENGERS


THE BAXTER BUILDING. HOME OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR.
WHAT HAPPENED TO THIS PLACE?
SKRULLS TOOK OUT THE BUILDING. IT'S OKAY. NOTHING WE CAN'T FIX.
YIKES!
OKAY, I'M UP. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
THE SKRULL DETECTOR.
THE THING YOUR HUSBAND BUILT. WE NEED IT.
OH, REED'S ASLEEP. EVERYONE'S BEEN THROUGH SO MUCH. HE HADN'T SLEPT IN A WEEK.
ONE OF THE SKRULLS HAS OUR BABY.
EVERYONE UP!
WHAT IS IT?
EVERYONE UP! EVERYONE! LET'S GO!

OKAY, THE GOOD NEWS IS, BECAUSE OF THE INVASION, WE'RE STILL AT A CODE RED ALERT ALL OVER THE COUNTRY.
THAT MEANS THE AIRPORTS ARE CLOSED. THE BRIDGES IN AND OUT OF NEW YORK CITY ARE CLOSED OFF BY THE MILITARY.
ACCORDING TO THIS, THERE'S BEEN NO SKRULL SIGHTINGS OUTSIDE OF THE CENTRAL PARK INCIDENT SINCE THE CENTRAL PARK INCIDENT.
THIS JARVIS COULD VERY WELL STILL BE IN THE CITY WITH NO WAY TO GET OUT.
THE BAD NEWS IS IT'S THE BIGGEST CITY IN THE WORLD AND HE COULD BE ANY SHAPE, SIZE OR SEX, HIDING IN ANY CORNER OF ANY BUILDING FROM SOHO TO HARLEM.
BECAUSE OF THE EMERGENCY, I'VE HACKED SOME INTELLIGENCE SATELLITES AND SOME STARKTECH FILES, AND I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY SUPER-SKRULL SIGHTINGS.
OR SEEN ANY UNIDENTIFIED POWERED PERSONS.
I'VE ALSO TAKEN MY SKRULL DETECTOR TECH AND I'VE HACKED INTO THE SATELLITE PROGRAMS.
IT SHOULD WARN US OF ANY SHAPE-SHIFT IN AND AROUND THE MID-TOWN AREA.
BUT THE SKRULLS KEPT THEIR IDENTITY A SECRET BY *NOT* SHAPE-SHIFTING.
THEY HOLD THEIR FORM AT A MICRO-BIOLOGICAL LEVEL UNDETECTABLE BY OUR STANDARDS AND MEASUREMENTS.
IF HE DOESN'T SHAPE-SHIFT, WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO FIND HIM.
WE CAN REPORT IT TO THE AUTHORITIES, BUT WITH THE CITY IN THE SHAPE IT'S IN, I'M NOT SURE WHAT THEY'LL BE ABLE TO DO...
WHAT SHOULD *WE* DO IN THE MEANTIME?
WE SHAKE SOME TREES.

"THERE'S LITTLE CORNERS OF HELL ALL OVER THIS CITY.
"PLACES TO HIDE.
"PEOPLE WHO WILL HIDE YOU.
"FOR THE RIGHT PRICE.
"OR IF THERE'S SOMETHING--ANYTHING IN IT FOR THEM.
"PLACES YOU COULD BLEND IN AND NO ONE WOULD EVER NOTICE...

"WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO BE SUBTLE.
"WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO PLAY BY THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT.
"EVERY SECOND THIS KID IS MISSING IS BAD.
"EVERY SECOND.
"WE HAVE TO THINK DIFFERENTLY. WE HAVE TO THINK LIKE A SKRULL ON THE RUN.
"AND ONCE WE START DOWN THIS ROAD, WE HAVE TO MOVE FAST. TONIGHT.
"OUR JARVIS KNOWS WE'RE LOOKING FOR HIM.

PLEASE! I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU. THE SKRULL THAT WAS JARVIS. DO YOU KNOW WHO I MEAN?!
PLEASE!
JARVIS!
YES.
WHERE IS HE? WHERE DID HE GO?
I CAN'T SAY. I CAN'T TELL!
HE HAS MY BABY! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?! MY BABY!
I JUST WANT MY BABY! YOU DO THAT FOR ME AND I'LL MAKE SURE NOTHING HAPPENS TO YOU.
OKAY. OKAY...